

### REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application in light of the above amendments is courteously solicited.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider his rejection of independent claim 1 and the claims which depend therefrom.

Independent claim 1 sets forth a process for the selective removal of a nickel alloy brazing composition from a nickel-base alloy component. The process comprises the steps of providing a brazed assembly comprising the nickel-base alloy components joined by nickel alloy brazing composition. The brazed assembly is immersed in an electrolyte and a potential is applied across the electrolyte wherein the nickel alloy brazing composition is dissolved. The Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being obvious over the McGivern et al. reference taken with either Brucken et al. or Speirs et al. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider this rejection.

The McGivern patent was cited by Applicants in the body of the instant application and submitted in an Information Disclosure Statement. The McGivern patent is assigned to the assignee of the instant invention.

The McGivern patent deals with a process for removing a nickel brazing alloy from an iron-based alloy component. The process involves immersing a brazed assembly comprising iron-

based alloy components joined by nickel alloy brazing composition in an electrolyte comprising a solution of either  $H_2SO_4$  or NaOH. This process disclosed in the McGivern patent is totally different from the process of the instant application. The process of the instant application is drawn to the selective removal of a nickel alloy brazing composition from a nickel-base alloy component. In addition, the process of the present invention as set forth in dependent claim 3 comprises immersing a brazed assembly in an electrolyte which comprises a mineral acid solution selected from the group consisting of solutions containing HCl,  $HNO_3$  and mixtures thereof. There is nothing at all in the McGivern reference to suggest the process as claimed in original filed independent claim 1. The secondary references cited by the Examiner fail to teach the deficiencies noted above with regard to the primary reference. The Brucken et al. reference was cited to teach specific composition of reference electrodes. This reference does not remove the deficiencies noted above with regard to the primary reference. The Speirs et al. reference cited by the Examiner fails to teach the process as claimed in independent claim 1.

In addition to the foregoing, it is submitted that the dependent claims contain patentable merit in their own right. The mineral acid solution claimed in dependent claim 3 is not at all suggested by the prior art. In addition, claims 6, 8 and 9

claim the specific nickel-based alloy composition of the components which is not suggested by the prior art references. Furthermore, the brazing composition claimed in claims 6, 7, and 10 is not suggested by the prior art. In summation, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's rejection of independent claim 1 and the claims which depend therefrom is in error and should be withdrawn.

An earnest and thorough attempt has been made by the undersigned to resolve the outstanding issues in this case and place same in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or feels that a telephone or personal interview would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues which remain in this application after consideration of this amendment, the Examiner is courteously invited to telephone the undersigned and the same would be gratefully appreciated.

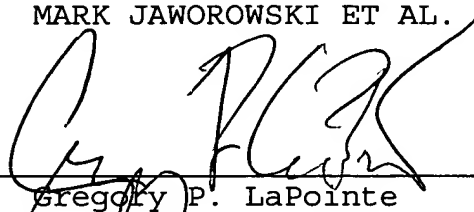
It is submitted that the claims as amended herein patentably define over the art relied on by the Examiner and early allowance of same is courteously solicited.

If any fees are required in connection with this case, it is respectfully requested that they be charged to Deposit Account No. 21-0279.

Respectfully submitted,

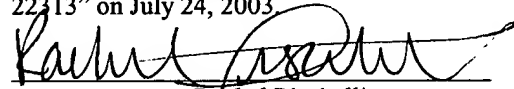
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: "Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313" on July 24, 2003.

  
Rachel Piscitelli

Version with markings to show changes made to the claim

3. (Amended) The process of claim 2, wherein said mineral acid solution is [a hydrochloric acid solution] selected from the group consisting of solutions containing HCl, HNO<sub>3</sub> and mixtures thereof.